gravity/magnetic data, 17,000 line kms of aero-magnetic data, 6400 line kms of geo-chemical sniffer survey data and drilled a total of 15 Nos. of exploratory wells in Mahanadi onshore and offshore area as also North East Coast (NEC) offshore areas.

Subsequently, out of the five exploration blocks awarded under first round of New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP-I) in offshore Mahanadi and the adjoining NEC areas, about 5330 line kms of 2D seismic data has so far been acquired in four blocks. Further seismic data acquisition will also be carried out during the post-monsoon session.

Additionally, under the second round of NELP (NELP-II), Production Sharing Contracts in respect of one onshore and two offshore blocks in Mahanadi area have been signed on 17.7.2001. As per the committed work programme in these blocks, seismic surveys and other exploratory activities are to be undertaken.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) The outcome of the exploratory efforts would be known after completion of the processing and interpretation of the currently acquired seismic data and its integration with other available geo-scientific data.

Allotment of Petrol Pumps and Gas Agencies in Tamil Nadu

278. SHRI C.P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of guidelines issued for the allotment of petrol pumps and gas agencies in Tamil Nadu;

(b) the number of petrol pumps and gas agencies which have been allotted during the period 1999-2000 and February, 2001;

(c) whether Government have recently received complaints regarding the allotment of petrol pumps and gas agencies;

(d) if so, the details of the complaint received; and

(e) whether any writ petitions have been filed before the High Court of Chennai against the allotment of petrol pumps and gas agencies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) The Government have laid down guidelines for selection of retail outlet dealers/LPG distributors/SKO-LDO dealers all over the country including Tamil Nadu. Under the guidelines, locations included in the RO/LPG/SKO-LDO. Marketing Plans are advertised and selection is made through the Dealer Selection Boards (DSBs) as per the prescribed procedure. It generally takes 6—12 months for commissioning the dealerships/distributorships from the date of interview.

(b) 21 retail outlet dealerships and 43 LPG distributorships have been allotted in the State of Tamil Nadu during the period 1999-2000 and February, 2001.

(c) and (d) Complaints against selection of dealers received have all been forwarded to the concerned oil marketing company for action as per the guidelines issued.

(e) Yes, Sir.

Tenders for Exploration of Oil

†279. SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the work for exploration of oil has started in the segments over recently;

(b) if so, by when this work will be completed; and

(c) the steps taken by Government for inviting tenders for the remaining for exploration of oil?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Government has awarded 23 blocks for exploration of oil and gas in June, 2001. Production Sharing Contracts for these 23 blocks were signed on 17.07.2001. The

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

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